

INFORMATION BULLETIN (00-2a Revised)
Sustainable Fisheries Division
907-586-7228

January 21, 2000
2:10 p.m.

NMFS PROVIDES ADVANCE NOTICE OF STELLER SEA LION PROTECTION
MEASURES FOR THE POLLOCK FISHERIES OFF ALASKA

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is preparing an emergency rule to implement Steller sea lion protection measures for the pollock fisheries off Alaska, according to Steven Pennoyer, Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS. This emergency rule was recommended by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council). NMFS intends to have the emergency rule effective by January 20, 2000, for a period of 180 days. The purpose of this bulletin is to provide advance notice of the elements currently contemplated for the emergency rule so that the affected public has opportunity to prepare for these regulatory changes. This bulletin is for informational purposes only. Do not rely on it to guide you in compliance with the upcoming regulatory changes.

ALEUTIAN ISLANDS CLOSURE

Under the emergency rule, the Aleutian Islands subarea will be closed to directed fishing for pollock.

BERING SEA MANAGEMENT MEASURES

STELLER SEA LION CONSERVATION AREA (SCA)

The emergency rule would establish a conservation area to regulate total removals of pollock. This area was referred to as the Critical Habitat/Catcher Vessel Operational Area (CH/CVOA) in previous emergency rulemaking. The SCA will include the portion of Bering Sea critical habitat known as the Bogoslof foraging area and the portion of the Catcher Vessel Operational Area that extends eastward from the Bogoslof foraging area. The SCA will consist of the area of the Bering Sea Subarea between 170°00'W and 163°00'W, south of straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed:

55°00'N 170°00'W;
55°00'N 168°00'W;
55°30'N 168°00'W;

55°30'N 166°00'W;
 56°00'N 166°00'W;
 56°00'N 163°00'W.

The emergency rule restricts pollock harvests within the SCA as described below.

FISHING SEASONS

The emergency rule will establish new fishing seasons for the four sectors of the Bering Sea pollock fishery that are defined in the American Fisheries Act (AFA). These new fishing seasons are summarized below. Under the RFRPAs, NMFS determined that only two seasons were necessary outside of the SCA (combined A/B and C/D), and that stand-downs between the seasons were superfluous. Under the emergency rule, all sectors would have the same fishing season dates as described in the table below.

Area	Season			
	A	B	C	D
Outside SCA	January 20 - June 10 (combined A/B season)		June 10 - November 1 (combined C/D season)	
Inside SCA	Jan. 20 - April 1	April 1 - June 10	June 10 - Aug. 20	Aug. 20 - Nov. 1

TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL APPORTIONMENT OF THE DIRECTED FISHING ALLOWANCE (DFA)

Under the emergency rule, the pollock DFA allocated to each industry sector under the AFA, would be apportioned to the fishing seasons previously identified, according to the following formula recommended by the Council and set out below. The RFRPAs specify the amount of the total annual DFA that can be taken from the SCA in each season: A season 15 percent, B season 5 percent, C season 4.5 percent, D season 7.5 percent. Overages and underages of SCA amounts may be "rolled over" from the A season SCA limit to the B season SCA limit so that no single season exceeds 15 percent of the annual DFA, and that the combined A/B limit inside the SCA of 20 percent of the annual DFA is not exceeded.

	Seasonal Directed Fishing Allowance (DFA) and harvest limits within the SCA (in percent)			
	A/B (40% of annual DFA)		C/D (60% of annual DFA)	
Industry sector	A-SCA limit	B-SCA limit	C-SCA limit	D-SCA limit
Inshore	42	14	13.5	22.5
C/P	24.75	8.25	0	0
Mothership	37.5	12.5	0	0
CDQ	62	20.5	14	23

GULF OF ALASKA MANAGEMENT MEASURES

FISHING SEASONS AND TAC APPORTIONMENTS

The emergency rule will establish new fishing seasons and pollock TAC apportionments in the Western and Central (W/C) Regulatory Areas of the GOA. These new fishing seasons are summarized below. The TAC for pollock in the combined W/C Regulatory Areas would continue to be apportioned among Statistical Areas 610, 620, and 630 in proportion to the distribution of the pollock biomass as determined by the most recent NMFS surveys. The pollock fishing season in the Eastern Regulatory Area would be unchanged.

Western and Central Areas of the Gulf of Alaska		
Season	TAC Apportionment	Season dates
A	30%	January 20 - March 1
B	15%	March 15 - May 31
C	30%	August 20 - September 15
D	25%	October 1 - November 1

POLLOCK TAC APPORTIONMENT WITHIN THE SHELIKOF STRAIT CONSERVATION AREA

Under the emergency rule, the Shelikof Strait conservation area TAC apportionment will be determined annually during the specification process.

The Shelikof Strait conservation area is defined as the area bound by straight lines and shoreline connecting the following coordinates in the following order:

58E51' N lat. 153E15' W long.;

58E51' N lat. 152E00' W long.; and, the intersection of 152E00' W long. with Afognak Island; aligned counterclockwise around the shoreline of Afognak, Kodiak, and Raspberry Islands to

57E00' N lat. 154E00' W long.;

56E30' N lat. 154E00' W long.;

56E30' N lat. 155E00' W long.;

56E00' N lat. 155E00' W long.;

56E00' N lat. 157E00' W long.; and, the intersection of 157E00' W long. with the Alaska Peninsula.

A separate TAC will be determined for this area based on winter hydroacoustic survey data. The GOA TAC for area 610, and areas 620 and 630 outside of the Shelikof Strait conservation area, will be reduced proportionally by this amount. When NMFS determines that the A or B season pollock TAC from within the Shelikof Strait conservation area has been reached, NMFS will prohibit directed fishing for pollock within Shelikof Strait. For the A season in 2000, NMFS has specified a Shelikof Strait catch limit of 14,366 mt.

GOA TRIP LIMITS

The Council recommended that NMFS establish a 300,000 lb (136 mt) trip limit for catcher vessels harvesting pollock in the directed pollock fisheries of the GOA to further disperse and slow fishing effort. This emergency rule prohibits the operator of a catcher vessel fishing for groundfish in the GOA from retaining on board more than 300,000 lb (136 mt) of pollock harvested in the GOA. This trip limit would not exempt vessels from existing regulations that require 100 percent retention of pollock when directed fishing for pollock is open. In addition, to prevent the large scale use of tender vessels to avoid the trip limit restriction, this emergency rule also prohibits vessels from operating as tenders in the GOA east of 157E00' W long. Vessels operating as tenders in the GOA west of 157E00' W long., are prohibited from retaining on board more than 600,000 lb (272 mt) (the equivalent of 2 fishing trips) of unprocessed pollock.

SEASONAL BS/GOA EXCLUSIVE AREA REQUIREMENTS

The Council recommended that catcher vessels be prohibited from participating in directed fishing for pollock in the BS and GOA in concurrent seasons as described in the table below. Catcher vessels less than 125 ft (38.1 m) LOA would be exempt from this restriction in area 620 east of 157°00' W long. and in area 630. In the BS, the emergency rule establishes two directed fishing apportionments for pollock outside the SCA; A/B and C/D. However, in the GOA, the emergency rule establishes four seasonal directed fishing apportionments. Therefore, if a catcher vessel chose to participate in the BS A/B season, it would not be eligible to participate in the GOA until the start of the next GOA season, which in this case, would be the C season. Similarly, if a catcher vessel chose to participate in the GOA A season, they would not be eligible to participate in the BS until the start of the next BS season, which would be the C/D season. The purpose of this requirement is to prevent large shifts of effort between the BS and the GOA when season start dates are not concurrent.

If you own or operate a catcher vessel and engage in directed fishing for pollock in the	During the...	Then you are prohibited from subsequently engaging in directed fishing for pollock in the...
Bering Sea subarea	A/B season	GOA until the following C season
	C/D season	GOA until the A season of the next year
GOA	A season	BSAI until the following C/D season
	B season	BSAI until the following C/D season
	C season	BSAI until the A/B season of the following year
	D season	BSAI until the A/B season of the following year

REVISED 2000 INTERIM SPECIFICATIONS

To allow the Bering Sea and GOA pollock fisheries to commence on January 20, 2000, this emergency rule will revise the 2000 interim specifications for pollock by using the final TAC recommendations made by the Council in December 1999 and revising them to comport with the emergency rule measures outlined above.

REVISED INTERIM 2000 HARVEST AMOUNTS FOR POLLOCK IN THE BERING SEA SUBAREA

Species & Component	Area	A/B Season (mt)		
		Interim TAC	A-SCA Limit	B-SCA Limit
Pollock ¹				
CDQ	BS	45,560	28,247	9,339
Incidental Catch Allowance (ICA)	BS	51,255	n/a	n/a
Inshore ²	BS	194,769	81,803	27,268
Offshore catcher/processor ³	BS	155,815	38,564	12,855
Mothership	BS	38,954	14,608	4,869

¹The AFA requires that 10 percent of the annual pollock TAC be allocated as a directed fishing allowance for the CDQ sector. Then, NMFS is subtracting 5 percent of the remainder as an incidental catch allowance for pollock, which is not apportioned by season or area. The remainder of this amount is further allocated by sector as follows: inshore, 50 percent; catcher/processor, 40 percent; and motherships, 10 percent.

²Under the emergency rule, NMFS will close the SCA to inshore vessels greater than 99 ft (30.2 m) LOA while maintaining a sufficient SCA allowance to support fishing activities by inshore catcher vessels under 99 ft (30.2 m) LOA for the duration of the current opening. However, once the specified SCA limit is reached, all inshore vessels will be prohibited from engaging in directed fishing for pollock inside the SCA.

³Section 210(c) of the AFA requires that not less than 8.5 percent of the directed fishing allowance allocated to listed catcher/processers shall be available for harvest only by eligible catcher vessels delivering to listed catcher/processers.

REVISED FIRST SEASONAL ALLOWANCES OF POLLOCK IN THE WESTERN (W) AND CENTRAL (C) REGULATORY AREAS OF THE GULF OF ALASKA (GOA)

Species	Area	A Season Interim TAC (mt)
Pollock	W (610)	5,465
	C (620 outside Shelikof Strait)	3,252
	C (630 outside Shelikof Strait)	4,278
	Shelikof Strait	14,366
	Total	27,361

¹ The pollock catch limit for the Shelikof Strait conservation zone is determined by calculating the ratio of the most recent estimate of pollock biomass in Shelikof

Strait (489,900 mt) divided by the most recent estimate of total pollock biomass in the GOA (933,000 mt). This ratio is then be multiplied by the pollock TAC in the A season for the Western and Central areas of the GOA (27,361 mt).

POLLOCK TRAWL EXCLUSION ZONES

The emergency rule prohibits directed fishing for pollock within 20 nm of rookeries and haulouts in the Bering Sea subarea that were identified for closure in the BiOp. The Council recommended closure or partial closure of 44 rookeries and haulouts in the GOA, with nine sites open or partially closed. The emergency rule closes 50 rookeries and haulouts in the GOA, with three sites remaining open to limited fishing: two sites in waters of the State of Alaska (Pt. Elrington and The Needles) and one site with alternative protective measures (Sea Lion Rocks). Limited pollock harvests may be authorized at two additional (Cape Barnabas and Gull Point) sites in conformance with a research plan to be developed at a later date. The emergency rule will revise Tables 4, 5, and 6 to 50 CFR 679 which will display existing no-trawl zones and new pollock trawl exclusion zones. The revisions are displayed as Tables 12, 13, and 20 below:

Table 12 to 50 CFR part 679--Steller sea lion protection areas in the Bering Sea subarea

Management Area/Island/Site	Boundaries to				Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within. . .(nm)		Trawling prohibited within (nm)	
	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Nov. 1 through June 1	June 1 through November 1	Jan. 1 through April 15	Year-round
Walrus	57 11.00 N	169 56.00 W			20	20		10
Uliaga	53 04.00 N	169 47.00 W	53 05.00 N	169 46.00 W		20		
Chuginadak	52 46.70 N	169 41.90 W				20		
Kagamil	53 02.50 N	169 41.00 W				20		
Samalga	52 46.00 N	169 15.00 W				20		
Adugak	52 55.00 N	169 10.50 W			20	20		10
Umnak/Cape Aslik	53 25.00 N	168 24.50 W			20	20		
Ogchul	52 59.71 N	168 24.24 W			20	20		10
Bogoslof/Fire Island	53 55.69 N	168 02.05 W			20	20		10
Emerald	53 17.50 N	167 51.50 W				20		
Unalaska/Cape Izigan	53 13.64 N	167 39.37 W			20	20		
Unalaska/Bishop Pt	53 58.40 N	166 57.50 W			20	20		
Akutan/Reef-lava	54 08.10 N	166 06.19 W	54 09.10 N	166 05.50 W	20	20		
Old Man Rocks	53 52.20 N	166 04.90 W			20	20		
Akutan/Cape Morgan	54 03.39 N	165 59.65 W	54 03.70 N	166 03.68 W	20	20	20	10
Rootok	54 03.90 N	165 31.90 W	54 02.90 N	165 29.50 W		20		
Akun/Billings Head	54 17.61 N	165 32.06 W	54 17.57 N	165 31.71 W	20	20	20	10
Tanginak	54 12.00 N	165 19.40 W			20			
Tigalda/Rocks NE	54 09.60 N	164 59.00 W	54 09.12 N	164 57.18 W	20	20		
Unimak/Cape Sarichef	54 34.30 N	164 56.80 W			20	20		
Aiktak	54 10.99 N	164 51.15 W			20			
Ugamak	54 13.50 N	164 47.50 W	54 13.00 N	164 47.00 W	20	20	20	10
Round	54 12.05 N	164 46.60 W				20		
Sea Lion Rock (Amak)	55 27.79 N	163 12.24 W			20	20	20	10
Amak and rocks	55 24.20 N	163 09.60 W	55 25.90 N	163 09.90 W	20	20		

¹Three nm NO TRANSIT ZONES are described at 50 CFR 227.12(a)(2) of this title.

²Closure zones around many of these sites also extend into statistical area 610 of the Gulf of Alaska Management Area.

³Where two sets of coordinates are given, the baseline extends in a clock-wise direction from the first set of geographic coordinates along the shoreline at mean lower-low water to the second set of coordinates. Where only one set of coordinates is listed, that location is the base point.

Table 13 to 50 CFR part 679--Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas in the Gulf of Alaska
(Sheet 1 of 2)^{1,2}

Management Area/Island/Site	Boundaries to				Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within... (nm)		Trawling prohibited within. . . (nm)
	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Nov. 1 through June 1	June 1 through November 1	Year-round
Bird	54 40.16 N	163 17.57 W			10	10	
South Rocks	54 18.14 N	162 41.52 W			10	10	
Clubbing Rocks	54 41.98 N	162 26.74 W	54 42.00 N	162 26.50 W	10	10	10
Pinnacle Rock	54 46.06 N	161 45.85 W			10	10	10
Sushilnoi Rocks	54 49.30 N	161 42.73 W				10	
Olga Rocks	55 00.45 N	161 29.81 W	54 59.09 N	161 30.89 W	10	10	
Jude	55 15.75 N	161 06.27 W			10	10	
Sea Lion Rocks (Shumagins) ³	55 04.70 N	160 31.04 W			10	10	
The Whaleback	55 16.82 N	160 05.04 W			10	10	
Chernabura	54 45.18 N	159 32.99 W	54 44.87 N	159 35.74 W	10	10	10
Castle Rock	55 16.47 N	159 29.77 W				10	
Atkins	55 03.50 N	159 18.50 W			10	10	10
Spitz	55 46.80 N	158 53.20 W				10	
Mitrofanina	55 50.00 N	158 42.00 W			10	10	
Kak	56 17.30 N	157 50.10 W				10	
Lighthouse Rocks	55 46.79 N	157 24.89 W			10	10	
Sutwik	56 31.05 N	157 20.47 W	56 32.00 N	157 21.00 W		10	
Chowiet	56 00.54 N	156 41.42 W	56 00.30 N	156 41.60 W	10	10	10
Nagai Rocks	55 50.00 N	155 46.00 W			10	10	
Chirikof	55 46.50 N	155 39.50 W	55 46.44 N	155 43.46 W	10	10	10
Puale Bay	57 40.60 N	155 23.10 W			10	10	
Kodiak/Point Ikolik	57 17.12 N	154 48.29 W			10		
Takli	58 01.75 N	154 31.25 W				10	
Cape Gull	58 11.50 N	154 09.60 W	58 12.50 N	154 10.50 W		10	

¹Three nm NO TRANSIT ZONES are described at 50 CFR 227.12(a)(2) of this title.

²Where two sets of coordinates are given, the baseline extends in a clock-wise direction from the first set of geographic coordinates along the shoreline at mean lower-low water to the second set of coordinates. Where only one set of coordinates is listed, that location is the base point.

³Vessels less than or equal to 60 feet LOA are exempt from the 20 nm closure at Sea Lion Rocks.

Table 13 to 50 CFR part 679--Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas in the Gulf of Alaska
(Sheet 2 of 2)^{1,2}

Management Area/Island/Site	Boundaries to				(Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within... (nm))		Trawling prohibited within... (nm)
	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Nov. 1 through June 1	June 1 through November 1	Year-round
Sitkinak/Cape Sitkinak	56 34.30 N	153 50.96 W	56 34.20 N	153 51.05 W	10	10	
Kodiak/Cape Ugat	57 52.41 N	153 50.97 W			10	10	
Kodiak/Cape Barnabas	57 10.20 N	152 53.05 W			10	10	
Kodiak/Gull Point	57 21.45 N	152 36.30 W			10	10	
Shakun Rock	58 32.80 N	153 41.50 W			10	10	
Twoheaded Island	56 54.50 N	153 32.75 W	56 53.90 N	153 33.74 W	10	10	
Cape Douglas (Shaw Island)	59 00.00 N	153 22.50 W				10	
Latax Rocks	58 40.10 N	152 31.30 W			10	10	
Ushagat/SW	58 54.75 N	152 22.20 W				10	
Ugak	57 23.60 N	152 17.50 W	57 21.90 N	152 17.40 W		10	
Sea Otter Island	58 31.15 N	152 13.30 W			10	10	
Long	57 46.82 N	152 12.90 W			10		
Kodiak/Cape Chiniak	57 37.90 N	152 08.25 W			10	10	
Sugarloaf	58 53.25 N	152 02.40 W			10	10	10
Sea Lion Rocks (Marmot)	58 20.53 N	151 48.83 W			10	10	
Marmot	58 13.65 N	151 47.75 W	58 09.90 N	151 52.06 W	10	10	10
Perl	59 05.75 N	151 39.75 W			10	10	
Outer (Pye) Island	59 20.50 N	150 23.00 W	59 21.00 N	150 24.50 W	10	10	10
Steep Point	59 29.05 N	150 15.40 W				10	
Chiswell Islands	59 36.00 N	149 34.00 W			10	10	
Rugged Island	59 49.80 N	149 23.30 W	59 51.00 N	149 25.30 W	10		
Point Elrington ³	59 56.00 N	148 15.20 W					
Wooded Island (Fish)	59 52.90 N	147 20.65 W			10	10	
The Needles ³	60 06.64 N	147 36.17 W					
Glacier Island	60 51.30 N	147 14.50 W			10	10	
Seal Rocks	60 09.78 N	146 50.30 W			10	10	
Cape Hinchinbrook	60 14.00 N	146 38.50 W				10	
Hook Point	60 20.00 N	146 16.50 W				10	
Cape St. Elias	59 48.00 N	144 35.50 W			10	10	

¹Three nm NO TRANSIT ZONES are described at 50 CFR 227.12(a)(2) of this title.

²Where two sets of coordinates are given, the baseline extends in a clock-wise direction from the first set of geographic coordinates along the shoreline at mean lower-low water to the second set of coordinates. Where only one set of coordinates is listed, that location is the base point.

³Restrictions at Point Elrington and The Needles will be considered by the Alaska Board of Fisheries because these areas fall completely within the State of Alaska management area of Prince William Sound.

Table 20 to 50 CFR part 679--Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas in the Aleutian Islands subarea^{2,3}

Management Area/Island/Site	Boundaries to				Trawling prohibited within. . . (nm)
	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Year-round
Yunaska Island	52 41.40 N	170 36.35 W			10
Kasatochi Island	52 11.11 N	175 31.00 W			10
Adak Island	51 35.50 N	176 57.10 W	51 37.50 N	176 59.60 W	10
Gramp Rock	51 28.87 N	178 20.58 W			10
Tag Island	51 33.50 N	178 34.50 W			10
Ulak Island	51 18.90 N	178 58.90 W	51 18.70 N	179 59.60 W	10
Semisopochnoi/Pochnoi Point	51 57.30 N	179 46.00 E			10
Semisopochnoi/Petrel Point	52 01.40 N	179 36.90 E	52 01.50 N	179 39.00 E	10
Amchitka Island/East Cape	51 22.26 N	179 27.93 E	51 22.00 N	179 27.00 E	10
Amchitka Is/Column Rocks	51 32.32 N	178 49.28 E			10
Ayugadak Point	51 45.36 N	178 24.30 E			10
Kiska Island/Lief Cove	51 57.19 N	177 20.41 E	51 57.24 N	177 20.49 E	10
Kiska Island/Cape St. Stephen	51 52.50 N	177 13.00 E	51 53.50 N	177 12.00 E	10
Buldir Island	52 20.38 N	175 53.85 E	52 20.25 N	175 54.03 E	10
Agattu Island/Cape Sabek	52 22.50 N	173 43.30 E	52 21.80 N	173 41.40 E	10
Agattu Island/Gillon Pt	52 24.13 N	173 21.31 E			10
Attu Island/Caper Wrangell	52 55.36 N	172 27.22 E	52 55.34 N	172 27.55 E	10
Seguam Island	52 21.05 N	172 34.40 W	52 21.02 N	172 33.60 W	20
Agligadak Island	52 06.09 N	172 54.23 W			20

¹Three nm NO TRANSIT ZONES are described at 50 CFR 227.12(a)(2) of this title.

²Where two sets of coordinates are given, the baseline extends in a clock-wise direction from the first set of geographic coordinates along the shoreline at mean lower-low water to the second set of coordinates. Where only one set of coordinates is listed, that location is the base point.